

The Odds – Percent this break happens

Recall the bidding and play so far to modify expected percentages.

Single finesse works: 50%

3 cards out break 2-1: 78%

4 cards out break 2-2: 41%

5 cards out break 3-2: 68%

6 cards out break 3-3: 35%

4 cards out, the Queen falls: 53%

5 cards out, the Queen falls: 33%

Based on the ACBL texts of Audrey Grant

Vol I, *Bidding*

Vol II, *Play of the Hand*

Vol III, *Defense*

Vol IV, *Commonly Used Conventions*

Vol V, *More Commonly Used Conventions*

With additional materials from a variety of sources

Opening Lead

Most important defensive play of the hand.

Pick the suit first, then pick the card.

Good leads

Partner's bid suit

Your own bid suit

Any suit for which partner promised support

An unbid major suit

An unbid minor suit

Poor leads

Any suit bid by declarer

Any suit bid by dummy

Any suit headed by a tenace

Any suit headed by one honor

If you must lead away from an honor, lead away from the King, not the Ace

Against Notrump

Lead a suit that will eventually establish tricks for your partnership

Against Trump

If you plan to ruff, get them before declarer pulls trump

Do not lead trump if you think that either you or partner has natural trump tricks or will be able to ruff

Do not lead trump because you are "in doubt"

Do lead trump if you want to pull trump yourself and play at notrump (rare)

Which card?

Against Notrump

Top of three touching honors

Fourth best from a long suit

Top of xxx

Top of a doubleton

Do not lead an Ace unless it will immediately defeat the contract

Do not lead a King unless you also hold the Queen and either Ace or Jack

Against Trump

Singleton

Top of two touching honors

Top of an interior sequence (J from KJ10xx)

Etiquette

Have fun.

Be courteous to everyone.

Be nice to your partner.

Play only the systems and conventions you both know and both want to play.

Tolerate your partner's errors.

Pick up the slack for a weaker partner.

Keep a poker face.

Wait until all 52 cards have been dealt before picking up any of your cards.

Never bid out of turn.

Use only the fifteen words in the bidding vocabulary.

Bid in a consistent manner that conveys no additional information.

Keep table talk to a minimum during play.

When dummy, do not touch a card or say a word.

Never play out of turn.

Keep your cards in sight of all players at all times.

Do not touch your hand until it is time to play your card.

Do not touch any card that is not yours.

Play all cards in a consistent manner that conveys no additional information.

When you have won a trick, gather the cards and put them away before leading to the next trick.

After play is complete, refrain from giving lessons unless requested.

This helper by Howard Bandy

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Preemptive Opening Bids

A preemptive opening bid is an intentional overbid, and is intended primarily to disrupt the communications of the opponents who are likely to have a solid game or slam.

When you preempt, anticipate being doubled and being set 300 points.

Very few preempts should be made in social bridge.

Preempting when dealer, or in seat 2 when dealer passed, often results in missing a game or slam.

A hand that could open or overcall according to those guidelines should not make a preemptive bid.

Before making a preemptive bid, consider bids that already been made by your opponents, what seat you are in relative to the strong hands, and what your relative vulnerability is.

The requirements to make an opening or overcalling preemptive bid are:

Ten or fewer high card points.

Twelve or fewer total points.

With a 7 card suit, bid 3.

With an 8+ card suit, bid 4.

Response to Your Partner's Preempt

With 0 to 15 points, pass.

With 16 or more, (no trump support is required), raise one level.

With 16 or more, and a suit at least as long and strong as the preempter, and preferably higher ranking, bid your own suit.

Competing Against a Preempt

Double of a preemptive bid is for takeout and shows 17 or more points.

Partner of doubler may either respond normally and search for an offensive contract, or convert the takeout to a penalty double by passing.

Slam Bidding

When you are not sure you have enough strength for a small slam, bidding one trick over game is a slam invitation. The responder bids the slam with the upper end of the previously described point range, passes with the lower end.

Blackwood

When the contract will be an agreed upon trump suit, one partner bids 4NT and asks the other for the number of aces held. Both partners must know what the suit will be at the time 4NT is bid. The response is:

5C: 0 or 4 aces

5D: 1 ace

5H: 2 aces

5S: 3 aces

If the partnership has all four aces, 5NT asks for kings. The responses are the same.

The 4NT bidder determines the level, and places the contract. The responder then passes.

Do not count a void as an ace.

Gerber

When the contract will be an agreed upon notrump, one partner bids 4C and asks for aces. The bid is Gerber when there has been one or more natural notrump bids and 4C is a jump. If 4C could be considered natural, it is not Gerber. The response is:

4D: 0 or 4 aces

4H: 1 ace

4S: 2 aces

4NT: 3 aces

If the partnership has all four aces, 5C asks for kings. The responses are the same.

Gerber is never a cheaper way than Blackwood to ask for aces when the contract will be in a trump suit.

Declarer's Play of the Hand

Before making any play from the dummy, plan out your play.

Notrump Contract

Count winners.

If you have enough winners to make the contract, take them as soon as you get the lead.

If you need more winners:
promote high cards
develop long suits
finesse

If possible, keep control of all suits until the winners you need have been set up, but lose losers early.

Trump Contract

Count losers.

Pull trump, take winners, set up necessary extra tricks:
promote high cards
develop long suits (after pulling trump)
finesse
trump losers
discard losers

If possible, stay in the lead until opponents are out of trump, then lose losers later.

Finesse

A finesse is an effort to win a trick with a card that will certainly lose if lead.

Lead a small card from the other hand.

General Rules of Thumb for Play

Lead from the top of a sequence.

Follow from the bottom of a sequence.

Second hand low.

Third hand high.

Lead through strength.

Lead up to weakness.

Cover an honor (except when the cards being promoted belong to your opponents).

Return your partner's opening lead.

Your first discard signals a desirable suit.

High cards are encouraging, low cards are discouraging.

Responding to 2 of a Suit (Force to Game)

- 0 – 5: bid 2NT (regardless of balance)
6 – 10: raise opener to 3 with 3+ cards
bid 3NT if balanced
bid new suit
11+: agree on suit or notrump, use
forcing bids as necessary,
explore slam.

Responding to 1NT (Stayman)

- 0 – 7, no 5+ suit: pass
0 – 7, 5+ DHS: 2D, 2H, 2S SO
8 – 9, no 4+ mj: 2NT I
(opener: 16: pass, 18: 3NT)
8 – 9, 4+ mj: 2C (Stayman) F
(opener: longest major, 2H with 4 hearts,
2S with 4 spades, 2H with 4 both, 2D
with neither)
10 – 14, no 4+ mj: 3NT SO
10 – 14, 4/5 mj: 2C (Stayman) F
10 – 14, 6+ mj: 4H, 4S SO
15 & up: slam likely

Responding to 1NT (No Stayman)

- 0 – 7, no 5+ suit: pass
0 – 7, 5+ CDHS: 2C, 2D, 2H, 2S SO
8 – 9: 2NT I
(opener: 16: pass, 18: 3NT)
10 – 14, no 5+ mj: 3NT SO
10 – 14, 5 mj: 3H, 3S F
(opener: game in major with 3+ support,
otherwise 3NT)
10 – 14, 6+ mj: 4H, 4S SO
15 & up: slam likely

Responding to 2NT (Stayman)

- 0 – 2, balanced: pass
0 – 2, 6+ major: 4 major SO
3 – 8, balanced: 3NT SO
3 – 8, 4+ mj: 3C (Stayman) F
(opener: longest major, 3H with 4 hearts,
3S with 4 spades, 3H with 4 both, 3D
with neither)
9 – 10, balanced: 4NT I
(opener: 22: pass, 24: 6NT)

11+, balanced: 4C (Gerber) F
(then 4 to 7 NT)

11+, unbal: slam in golden fit

Responding to 2NT (No Stayman)

- 0 – 2, balanced: pass
0 – 2, 6+ major: 4 major SO
3 – 8, balanced: 3NT SO
3 – 8, 6+ mj: 4 major SO
3 – 8, 5+ mj: 3 major F
(opener: 4 mj with 3, 3NT with 2)
9 – 10, balanced: 4NT I
(opener: 22: pass, 24: 6NT)
11+, balanced: 4C (Gerber) F
(then 4 to 7 NT)
11+, unbal: slam in golden fit

Rebids by Opener

- Bid a new suit with 4+ cards.
Raise partner's suit with enough cards to
assure golden fit.
Opener can make as many bids as desired at 1
level with 13 to 16 points, or can make a
single level raise of responder's suit.
Voluntarily rebidding a suit indicates that it is
at least 6 cards long.
Voluntary raising of the bid level requires 3
more points than previously described.
Reverse by opener shows 17+ points.
Jump shift by opener shows 19+ points.
2NT by opener shows 19 to 21, balanced.

Rebids by Responder

- Bid a new suit with 4+ cards.
Raise partner's suit with enough cards to
assure golden fit.
Responder can make as many bids as desired
at 1 level with 6 to 10 points, or can bid a
single level raise of opener's suit.
Voluntarily rebidding a suit indicates that it is
at least 6 cards long.
Voluntary raising of the bid level requires 3
more points than previously described.

Overcalls

- All overcalls require 5+ card suits.
No overcall is forcing.
10 – 12: Overcall at 1 level with great suit
13 – 15: Overcall at 1 level
16+: Overcall at 2 level
16 – 18: Overcall 1NT, if balanced and all
suits bid by opponents well
stopped.

Responses to Overcalls

Same as responses to opening bids.

Takeout Doubles

- Double indicates shortness in opponent's suit
and support (4 cards or 3 strong cards) in
all unbid suits.
Evaluate hand using dummy points
13 – 16: Double – Forcing
(then pass unless forced)
17 – 21: Double – Forcing
(then raise to game in major,
or raise 1 level in minor)
Double of 1NT is for penalty, not takeout.

Response to Takeout Double

- Responder is forced to bid unless the right-
hand opponent bids first!!
Pass only with 6+ opp suit and 13+ points.
0 – 10: bid 4+ major as cheaply as
possible
bid 4+ minor as cheaply as
possible
11 – 12: 1NT only with opp well stopped
bid 4+ major 1 extra level
bid 4+ minor 1 extra level
2NT only with opp well stopped
13+: bid game in major with 4+
bid 3NT with opp well stopped

SKP Saguaro Bridge Helper

- Standard American Bidding System
- 5 card major opening
- 16-18 point no trump
- Strong two bids

Hand Evaluation

High Card Points – all hands.

Ace:	4
King:	3
Queen:	2
Jack:	1

Length Points – opening and NT dummy.

Add 1 for every card over 4 in every suit

Dummy Points – when a dummy in a trump suit with three or more trump.

Void:	5
Singleton:	3
Doubleton:	1

When a dummy and holding 2 or fewer trump, count only high card points – no length points and no dummy points.

Partnership Points Usually Needed

3NT:	26
4H, 4S:	26 (8+ card fit)
5C, 5D:	29 (8+ card fit)
6 any:	33
7 any:	37 (all 4 aces)

Opening Points

0 – 12:	pass
16 – 18, balanced:	1NT
13 – 21, unbalanced:	1 of a suit
22 – 24, balanced:	2NT
25 – 27, balanced:	3NT
22+, unbalanced:	2 of a suit

Opening Bid

- Open 1NT whenever you can
- Bid length before strength
- Bid longest suit
- Bid higher ranked of two 5 or 6 card suits
- Opening bid of a major indicates 5+ cards
- If no 5+ card major, bid longest minor
- Bid 1D with two 4 card minors
- Bid 1C with two 3 card minors

General Bidding Guidelines

- Opening bidder is describer; partner is the captain.
- The only forcing opening bids are 2 of a suit.
- Bid length before strength.
- Bid the higher ranked of two 5 card suits.
- Bid 4 card suits “up the line”.
- Voluntarily rebidding a suit indicates that it is at least 6 cards long.
- Voluntary raising of the bid level requires 3 more points than previously described.
- 4+ cards are required to support responders suits or openers second suit, unless they have been rebid.
- New suit bid by responder is forcing (unless responder has previously passed).
- Bid new suits until a golden fit is found.
- As soon as a golden fit is found, put the contract at the desired level.
- If there is no major suit golden fit, consider playing in notrump.
- If there are fewer than 26 combined points, stop at the lowest convenient partscore.
- When you (opener or responder) have completely described your point count, bid if forced, choose suit at lowest level if invited, or pass.
- Try to keep the stronger hand closed and the weaker hand the dummy.
- A double is for takeout if:
 - you and partner have not bid, and
 - bid being doubled is partscore in a suit.
- Double of a preempt is for takeout.
- Double of any notrump bid is for penalty.

Openers hand for 1 level opening bids:

13 – 15/16:	minimum
16/17 – 18:	medium
19 – 21:	maximum

Responders hand:

0 – 5:	pass
6 – 10:	minimum
11 – 12:	medium
13+:	maximum

Responding to 1 of a Minor

0 – 5:	pass
6 – 10:	bid 4+ card suit at 1 level raise opener to 2 with 5+ cards bid 1 NT (regardless of balance)
11 – 12:	bid 4+ card suit at 1 level raise opener to 3 with 5+ cards bid any other 4+ card suit, at 2 level if necessary
13 – 18:	bid a new suit and reevaluate after openers rebid
13 – 15:	bid 2NT with stoppers and balanced distribution
16 – 18:	bid 3NT with stoppers and balanced distribution
19+:	jump shift to force game, then explore slam

Responding to 1 of a Major

0 – 5:	pass
6 – 10:	raise opener to 2 with 3+ cards raise opener to 4 with 5+ cards bid 4+ card major at 1 level bid 1NT (regardless of balance)
11 – 12:	raise opener to 3 with 3+ cards bid any other 4+ card suit, at 2 level if necessary
13 – 18:	bid a new suit and reevaluate after openers rebid
13 – 15:	bid 2NT with stoppers and balanced distribution
16 – 18:	bid 3NT with stoppers and balanced distribution
19+:	jump shift to force game, then explore slam